

be depleted or that they may not be able to meet the commitments which have already been made and which will arise as a result of the passage of this bill then perhaps we ought to sooner rather than later, not wait until 1997 or 1994, do it now...

SPEAKER BAACK: Time.

SENATOR SCHMIT: ...step up the...reinstate the checkoff program.

SPEAKER BAACK: You do have five minutes of your own time now, if you'd like.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Thank you, Senator, I'll use it. If, in fact, within the next few days or weeks time that we find out from the Ethanol Authority the exact amount of money they have on hand, the commitments they have made, the amount of money they must escrow to meet those commitments and what that does to their future viability as an institution, then I think we need to come back to this body and express those concerns in dollars and cents and once we have done that, then I think we ought to recognize that we have a further responsibility and that would be to continue to fund this program. I say, and I believe that Senator Schrock and Senator Smith and others who are interested will agree with me, that if we see an aggressive program of plant construction and marketing of ethanol then I think the grain producers of this state will support the kind of a program we're talking about. We may have some problems to iron out relative to our ability to transfer these funds, but then we have another bill going across the board here which takes about \$8 million of beef checkoff funds and transfers them to a private nonprofit agency and no one seems to raise the question about that or no one seems to object when I raised that question the other day. So you have a number of issues here which I think are a deep concern to all of us. Senator Terry Carpenter used to say, when they asked him why he was in the Legislature, he had two reasons and I forget what one of them was, but the other reason was because it was fun to spend other people's money. Well, ladies and gentlemen, that's what we are doing here. We're spending other people's money and we're supposed to spend it on behalf of the people. We're supposed to spend it for a public purpose. That is what we had in mind when we passed LB...whatever it was, 1232, I believe, back in 1986. I've told you this story before. Some of you new members have not heard it, but Governor Kerrey at that time was very